

# Answer to "Why Camp Adair?" Found in Old News Clippings

## WHY CAMP ADAIR?

Speculation as to the naming of Camp Adair has been rife since its announcement a little more than a month ago. Why Camp Adair?

News stories at the time of the announcement of the name told us the camp was named after Lt. Henry R. Adair, the first Oregon man killed in the Mexican fracas in 1916. Further than that, little was available although Portland Sunday papers gave us Lt. Adair's picture in his 1916 uniform and a few facts of his career as a soldier.

To satisfy The Sentry and for the information of its readers, a somewhat more detailed explanation has been dug up, and if somewhat lengthy, yet we publish it here for permanent record. To begin with may we quote from the Portland Oregonian of June 23, 1916:

"Lieut. Henry Rodney Adair, who was reported killed in the battle of Carrizal, June 21, was born in Astoria, Ore., April 13, 1882. The first 18 years of his life were spent on a ranch in Clatsop county.

"At 15 years of age, Adair entered school for the first time at the Bishop Scott academy. Prior to that time he received his education from his mother.

"After spending two years at the Bishop Scott, he entered the Astoria high school, where he remained two years, leaving there in 1900 to enter West Point.

"He graduated from West Point in 1904, and entered the Tenth cavalry at Fort Robinson, Neb. In 1907 he was ordered to Fort McKinley, Philippine Islands, where he was stationed until 1909, when he returned for duty at Fort Ethan Allen, Vermont. In 1911 he was detailed to the Mounted service school, Fort Riley, where he graduated in 1912, after which he rejoined his regiment at Fort Ethan Allen. In 1913 he was ordered to Fort Houachuca, Ariz., and from there he was detailed in 1914 to take post-graduate course at Fort Riley. He returned to his regiment at Fort Houachuca in 1915. He returned to the border until March, 1916, when he entered Mexico with Colonel Dodd's flying cavalry, as acting adjutant. Since the bill for the war use of the army was passed he was notified that his promotion to a captaincy would take place July 1. His troop went further into the interior of Mexico than any other, in May marching several hundred miles.

"In 1912, while stationed at Fort Ethan Allen, he took part with cavalry officers from Belgium, Holland, Canada and England in the International horse show in New York, where he won the broad water jump, clearing the 18 foot distance with a foot to spare.

"He is survived by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. S. D. Adair, and two brothers and two sisters: W. Morris Adair, Alexander Adair, Mrs. Laussat R. Rogers and Mary A. Adair.

"The news of his death is being kept from his father who is at death's door in the Good Samaritan hospital."

According to newspaper stories current at the time of his death, Lt. Adair died "with his boots on" fighting against heavy odds and setting the price of his own life very high. One old newspaper story says "the young lieutenant's bravery astounded both his fellow soldiers and the Mexicans."

The skirmish in which Lt. Adair was killed began following a conference between his own Captain Boyd and a Mexican leader named Gomez. Before Captain Boyd could return to his troops the Mexicans began firing on the Americans. For two hours the battle raged as the American soldiers made their advance. Three days after the battle 39 dead Mexicans were found on the battlefield and 12 Americans including the bodies of Captain Boyd and Lt. Adair.

The advance was made against two machine guns, one implaced in an irrigation ditch and the other under cover of an orchard with barbed wire protecting their positions. Lt. Adair led some few of his men through cross fire from these guns and apparently routed the gun crews because his body was found in the rear of the machine gun positions.

News stories in papers of the time indicate that Lt. Adair accounted for at least 15 Mexicans with no weapon but his automatic pistol and that of his orderly. His orderly is recorded as a poor shot while Lt. Adair, the story says, was one of the best marksmen in the Tenth Cavalry, his regiment. The orderly kept ammunition in clips of both pistols while Lt. Adair did the firing.

Oregon was proud of her soldier hero at the time, as voiced in editorial comment throughout the state, and suggestions were persistent that the name of Lt. Adair be perpetuated in some manner. For instance, here is an editorial published in the Astorian in June, 1916:

"A thrill of pride mingles with the sting of sorrow when we recall the last act and dying words of Lieutenant Henry R. Adair, Astoria's hero and the first Oregon man to give his life in the war with Mexico. All Oregon should do honor to his memory, which should be made perpetual by the erection of a permanent memorial at some point on the Columbia highway where all Oregon might share it. Clatsop county claims him as a child, Astoria claims him as a high school student, Portland claims him as a young man. He belongs to all Oregon, he is Oregon's contribution to national life—what could be more fitting than that all people of his home state should pay tribute to his heroic character by raising a monument in his honor? And the movement should be started in Astoria. With undaunted courage Lieutenant Adair fought to the last and when he fell mortally wounded his last thoughts were of duty. 'Go on, sergeant,' he said to the man sent for ammunition who would have paused in his errand to make easier the last minutes of his dying commander. 'Go on sergeant.' These simple words should be engraven on eternal stone just as they are engraven now on the minds and hearts of his fellow citizens in whose service he fell fighting on the field of battle."

In a clipping without date or credit marking but apparently

from the Portland Oregonian, the following paragraphs indicate that Lt. Adair's exploit had been recognized before:

"Battery Henry Adair, on the Island of Oahu, on which is situated Honolulu, Hawaiian Islands, has been named in memory of First Lieutenant Henry Adair, Tenth United States Cavalry, whose home was in Portland and who was killed in action at Carrizal, Mexico, June 21, 1916.

"Major Henry J. Jewett, Corps of Engineers, U.S.A., yesterday received an official order, signed by Major-General Scott, chief of staff, U.S.A., in which the battery is so designated."

Although tempted to select only paragraphs, we reprint the following story in full from the Oregonian of July 16, 1916:

"Members of the family of the gallant Lieutenant Henry Rodney Adair, of the Tenth Cavalry, United States army, killed in action with Carranza Mexican troops at Carrizal and whose memory was honored by thousands at his funeral in Portland last Wednesday, have received additional accounts of the heroic manner in which he met his death.

"The Mexican president of Carrizal, who located the bodies of the American soldiers for the undertakers," says one of the accounts, "declared that he witnessed the fight from a room of his house in Carrizal and he declared that Lieutenant Adair was the bravest man he had ever seen.

"The president told the undertaker in charge that after Lieutenant Adair had been surrounded, he killed at least 15 men and as many horses.

"After the officer had exhausted his supply of rifle ammunition he swept the field with his automatic pistol, killing five or six more," the Mexican said. "And when he had exhausted these shells he took the pistol of a wounded negro trooper and had started to sweep the field with its fire when he was hit in the heart and fell forward on his face."

"The Americans in the party declare that this statement is borne out by the presence of horses and dead Mexicans around the place where Lieutenant Adair fell. The Mexican mayor of the little town also declared that 80 instead of 40 Mexicans had been killed in the battle.

"Another account corroborating these details is that of a Carranza soldier who took part in the battle with the troopers of the Tenth Cavalry.

"This Mexican soldier told O. J. Wilson, one of the undertakers who helped exhume the bodies of the slain Americans:

"You should have seen the white teniente (Lieutenant Henry Adair) fight. He was just a boy, slim and weak-looking, but he fought us like a madman. He operated his automatic pistol until it seemed like a machine gun, and when its work was finished he threw it at us and seized another from a dead trooper and fought us harder than ever. He was wounded, but still his bullets rained among us until one of our shots tore into his chest and he dropped dead."

"The Mexican," continued Wilson, "pointed out the spot where Lieutenant Adair fell. Before it was strewn thickly with the carcasses of Mexican horses, whose riders had been shot down by the officer. The soldier said Lieutenant Adair, thus single-handed, mowed down a cavalry charge of the Mexicans, fanning his automatic from side to side."

"Shells were strewn everywhere about the place where Adair died. His fight must have been one of the most gallant ever made by an American officer against hopeless odds."

In the Oregonian of July 12, 1916, there is a full column story of the funeral of Lt. Adair at which state and Portland military and patriotic organizations attended in a body. The funeral was military, beginning the Portland armory where the body lay in state for two hours followed by a procession to the Cathedral of St. Stephen, the Martyr. The casket was borne on a gun caisson in the procession and a group of non-commissioned officers from Vancouver barracks were pall bearers and formed the immediate escort.

Bishop Walter T. Sumner conducted the service at the cathedral. Music was furnished by several choirs combined and the service included a tribute to Lt. Adair by Mrs. June McMillan Ordway, who was a girlhood friend of Lt. Adair's mother and whose son was a schoolmate of the lieutenant's.

On the same page in the Oregonian with the story of his funeral is a poetic tribute by William McReynolds captioned with the lieutenant's full name, "Henry Rodney Adair." The poem appeared in a three column decorated border, hand lettered and decorated by Guy Stanley Henderson. The poem follows:

Glew brightly, lustrous star,  
Upon thine azure field;  
Proclaim thy glory far  
And tender homage yield,—  
This is thy son,  
Proud Oregon!

We hear the tramp of feet,  
We see the emblemed car;  
Now Death and Honour meet,  
With Glory's gates ajar,—  
Flag-shrouded breast,  
Go to thy rest.

Nobly the task was done  
In combat's fearful clash,—  
Nobly thy honours won  
In Fame's swift, golden flash;  
Sleep safe beneath  
Thy laurel wreath.

The stately fir and pine  
Thy Solemn requiem sing;  
A Nation's tears are thine,  
A Nation's love we bring,—  
And Heaven stands  
With outstretched hands.

## Hemorrhoids (Piles)

Why suffer?  
The Ambulant Way never fails.  
See DR. WIDMER  
Phone 424-W

## COMFORTABLE VISION

Dr. A. W. Marker  
Optometrist  
Phone 470 — Ball Bldg.  
Corvallis, Next Safeway Store

## Don C. Wilson, Agent

New York Life Ins. Co.

Corvallis—865-M

## CITY BARBER SHOP

2 Doors S. U.S. Nat'l. Bank  
Corvallis

"Oldest Union Barber Shop  
in Corvallis"

Open Evenings to 7:30



Phone  
Corvallis  
773

Paul H.  
**GATHERCOAL**  
357 Jackson St.



Wm. KONICK  
Jeweler  
Est. 1913

Corner Second & Madison Sts.  
Telephone 485, Corvallis

## Corvallis Hotel

and

## Golden Pheasant Food Shop

The most for your money  
in rooms and Good Food.

Opposite Both Banks  
Corvallis

## SEEING IS BELIEVING!

Come . . . Look  
And Be Convinced!

LANG WOOD RANGE  
Nearly New  
**\$39.50**

FRIGIDAIRE  
Tested—Approved—Guaranteed  
**\$54.50**

KELVINATOR  
New—5 Year Guarantee  
**\$154.95**

MONT-WARD WASHER  
Nearly New  
**\$39.50**

ELDRIDGE ELECTRIC  
SEWING MACHINE  
Portable  
**\$42.50**

Remember—The easiest terms  
are still available here.

**HECKART'S**

219 S. 2nd St., Corvallis, Ore.